

President's Corner

Spring Birders

by Janet Millenson

It's almost spring, that time of year when birds establish territories and renew bonds with others of their own kind. We birders can do the same things without needing showy plumage or a great singing voice. Here's what I mean.

Establish territory this spring by taking charge of your own block for the Breeding Bird Atlas project. It's a wonderful excuse to explore every habitat niche you can legally get to: streams, woodlots, fields, and developed areas. You'll enjoy sharpening your identification and observation skills. Resident birds vocalizing loudly in certain trees will become as familiar and recognizable as your neighbor down the street running his lawnmower.

Although the Atlas project is more than halfway over, there are still blocks that haven't yet been covered. We need your help. Please give it a try—you don't need to be an expert birder or devote vast amounts of time in order to participate. Contact your county's Atlas Coordinator and learn more.

Something else I'd like you to do this spring: attract one more member to MOS. Birders benefit from "flocking" with others.

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The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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NORTHERN LAPWING: A MARYLAND FIRST

The Frederick County Mid-Winter Count struck gold on Saturday, February 12, when Lyn and Skip Nelson discovered a Northern Lapwing in a field on Black's Mill Road west of Creagerstown. This was a first Maryland sighting of this Eurasian vagrant, and in the ensuing days *Vanellus vanellus* delighted many a birder and photographer.

The Nelson's discovery came at day's end, but Gary Smyle promptly got out the word through MD Osprey, and Sunday morning opened with birders scouring area fields. Hours went by, with no success.

It was after 3:30 when Barbara Gearhart refound the Lapwing on Black's Mill Road. John Hubbell and Jim Green were soon on the scene, and a handful of others, including Gary Smyle, got to see the handsome bird before it flew off. Then, as John Hubbell puts it, "The cell phone network kicked in."

An hour or so later, the bird was located again, this time by Hans Hoffmann, Jim Brighton, and Dave Powell, north of Creagerstown on Graceham Road. This time, everybody in the area got good looks at the striking plover.

In the days that followed, the Lapwing alternated between cooperatively hanging around its haunts on Black's Mill and Graceham, and disappearing for long stretches. Meantime, area roads were well covered by birders, some from distant states, plus newspaper and television reporters.



The Frederick County bird seems destined to join 20-30 other documented sightings in the United States. According to Phil Davis, secretary of the MD/DC Records Committee, Delaware has three records of Northern Lapwing (1953, 1997, and 1999), all from Bombay Hook; Virginia has one inadequately documented report from December 2004; and Pennsylvania has none.

Checking *Wikipedia*, Phil found that "The name *lapwing* derives from the 'lapping' sound its wings make, or the flapping flight, while *peewit* [another nickname] describes the bird's shrill call. This is a vocal bird in the breeding season, with constant calling as the crazed tumbling display flight is performed by the male." Its Latin name, *Vanellus*, means "little fan," also in reference to its slow, flapping flight.

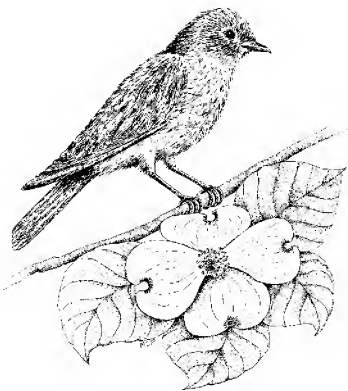


Northern Lapwing Debuts in Maryland, February, 2005.
Photos by Bob Mumford, Natural Images Photography

President's Corner *(continued from page 1)*

Having more birders means more eyes to spot rarities, more expertise to puzzle out tricky IDs, and more like-minded company on outings. Away from the field, birders can share their knowledge in Internet postings, in publications, and at meetings, and they can speak out as a group on environmental issues. Perhaps you have a birding buddy who's not a member, or one day you started chatting with someone who noticed you looking through binoculars. Make it your goal to bring that person into our club. Remember what happened to the Passenger Pigeons when their numbers fell too low!

Best wishes for good birding in the coming months.



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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by March 25, 2005 for the May/June 2005 issue.

*Photos of Northern Lapwing on page 1
© Bob Mumford, Natural Images Photography.*

*Illustrations on pages 1, 2, 8, and 10
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Illustration on page 11 by Gemma Radko.



DNR Reports... by Glen Therres

In the course of a career, one makes thousands of decisions. Many are easy, others difficult or complex. A few decisions in a career are extremely tough to make; recently I had to make one of those tough ones. No, I am not retiring (yet). After 28 years of monitoring all known Bald Eagle nests in Maryland, the Department of Natural Resources is discontinuing this practice. As the Associate Director responsible for endangered species in Maryland, this was my decision.

It was a very tough call, given my long tenure with this program. I have personally been monitoring Bald Eagle nesting since 1985, and I have overseen the Bald Eagle project since 1986. Twenty years of my 24-year career have been spent on this majestic animal. Why stop now?

During the program's 28 years, Maryland's nesting Bald Eagle population has made a tremendous recovery. In 1977, we documented only 41 nesting pairs in the State, and with only 45 young. In 2004, we documented 383 nesting pairs (and we were unable to monitor another 10 nest sites within the restricted air space around Washington, DC). Charles County alone had 53 young.

The Bald Eagle nesting population has surpassed our recovery goals. The criterion for removing the Bald Eagle in the Chesapeake Bay region from the federal threatened species list is 300-400 pairs with an average productivity rate of 1.1 young per active nest over 5 years. The Chesapeake Bay recovery region (Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, and southeastern Pennsylvania) has met this standard since 1993. Maryland alone has supported over 300 nesting pairs since 2001. In 2003, the total number of nesting pairs in the recovery region was 760.

In July 1999, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service formally proposed removing the Bald Eagle from the threatened species list and declaring its recovery a success. Five years later, the federal government has yet to finalize that action. It was always our intent to discontinue Bald Eagle nest monitoring once the eagle was delisted.

In view of DNR's budget constraints, I needed to trim the Natural Heritage Program budget. We have lots of priority needs for threatened and endangered species protection with the 450+ plants and animals on Maryland's list. Given the Bald Eagle's tremendous recovery, eagle nest monitoring became a low priority. We will still provide nest site protection for those 609 nests that we know of and any new ones we become aware of. You can help in this effort by reporting any Bald Eagle nests you know of to me (gtherres@dnr.state.md.us).

I will miss the low-level flying and the excitement of finding new nests. Flying in a small airplane 100-200 feet above the treetops gives one a "bird's-eye" perspective of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's landscape—and there is a lot of Bald Eagle nesting habitat out there. In recent years, a few Bald Eagles have started nesting on artificial structures, such as towers and Osprey platforms. A few others are now nesting in subdivisions around the area. Though the Bald Eagle may not adapt to man and his structures as well as the Osprey, these recent eagle nests suggest that the Bald Eagle may be able to tolerate us more than we thought. That would be good news for our recovered Bald Eagle population.



ATLAS YEAR FOUR: HUMP? WHAT HUMP?

BY WALTER ELLISON

Three down, two to go. We have just started the fourth year of the current Maryland and D.C. atlas project. In these last two years of field work, it may take some extra effort to light the fire within that kindles the desire to go forth and see what birds are out there in your block, or, preferably, that new block you haven't explored yet. It's a little like wanting to sleep in when that Thursday alarm clock goes off.

I myself become excited at the prospect of exploration. Empty spots on the map intrigue me; being able to document birds in little-known natural areas makes it all the more exhilarating. I cannot insist you become as peculiarly inquisitive (and acquisitive) as I am about this sort of exploration and discovery, but I hope you have caught a little bit of this addictive feeling from your atlas experience. For those who have yet to atlas, I hope you give it a try and find out how enjoyable it can be.

The good news about the upcoming field season is that we are in an excellent position to complete our work in the two remaining years. This is especially so if we can do a good job of attacking the empty and thin spots in our coverage. If we can find at least 30 or more species in every block with ten or fewer species, and boost blocks with fewer than 50 species to that level or better, we would be ready to complete them in year five.

As I write this in January, just 105 blocks (of 1,282) have no data and 116 report 20 or fewer species. The more people willing to work in these blocks, the fewer the blocks for each observer; if we had 221 observers,

each one would need to work on just one block. Or, if 110 observers took two blocks apiece, we would also reach our goal.

At this time, 245 blocks have more than 75 species, a rather stringent, but plausible, standard. In 1983-1987, there were 477 such blocks in Maryland and D.C., so we clearly have a ways to go. Block bird diversity varies, of course; blocks dominated by water may hold 50 or fewer nesting bird species; in highly urbanized blocks, 50 species would also be a good tally. In the countryside, on the other hand, it is reasonable to believe that a block could host 80 or more nesting birds.

The most practical measure of block completion is to at least match or approach the block totals from 1983-1987. We could then be reasonably assured we approximated the effort of the 1980s. (The 1983-1987 block data is available in the published book, in your block packet, or online at the atlas website: www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/MDDC2002_index.cfm under "Sightings by block.")

A few blocks may have lost several species because of wholesale habitat loss or degradation, but these will be few; in most blocks with some habitat loss, populations of the less common bird species would be smaller and more localized—but still present.

The point of the foregoing: if you are working on a block that approaches, meets, or exceeds the 1980s performance, **you really should tackle a block needing more work.** Counties in need of help include Allegany, northern Baltimore, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Garrett, northern Harford, Queen Anne's, Talbot, and Washington. For

contacts, see the list of County Coordinators at the atlas website (www.mdbirds.org/atlas/coord.html), or you can get in touch with me (rossgull@baybroadband.net).

- If you have been atlasing for the last three years, keep the faith: take on a new block, preferably in a county needing help.
- If you spend some time birding away from home, keep track of your observations and record the incidental atlas data on-line.
- If you have been on the sidelines of the atlas project until now, please help out; you are always welcome, and you will bring a fresh perspective and untapped energy to our effort.

Baltimore Swifts Soar on TV

The Chimney Swifts of Hampden will be featured on "Outdoors Maryland" (Maryland Public Television, Channels 22 & 26) on Tuesday, March 1, at 7:30 PM. This 8-minute segment, filmed last fall, showcases the Baltimore Bird Club's SwiftWatch Team, plus Mark & Buttons, chimney sweeps based in Owings Mills, and swifts inside a chimney, courtesy of Driftwood Wildlife Association in Texas.

The program repeats
Saturday, March 5, at 5:30 PM.

BACKYARD ORNITHOLOGIZING

Maryland birders will have a notable opportunity to enjoy ornithology in action when the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Association of Field Ornithologists meet jointly in Prince George's County in April. All MOS members are invited to attend the meeting, and MOS members are also encouraged to present the results of their own avian research.

The four-day meeting—April 21 to April 24—will take place at the Sheraton College Park Hotel in Beltsville, under the auspices of the USFWS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the Maryland Ornithological Society. More than 150 scientific papers and posters are on the program.

The Plenary session on Friday morning will feature the Margaret Morse Nice lecture by Eugene Morton of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and Bridget Stutchbury of York University; these behavioral ecologists have explored how and why male and female songbirds seek extra-pair matings. On Friday afternoon, North American Breeding Bird Survey Coordinators will meet and conduct a symposium. Friday evening, the National Wildlife Visitor Center will host a poster session and reception.

On Saturday morning, a group of ornithologists from Mexico will present a symposium on the status of various ornithological projects in Mexico, in anticipation of the quadrennial North American Ornithological Conference in Veracruz in 2006.

Local MOS members will lead short local field trips on Friday and Saturday mornings, and longer trips on Sunday. In addition, See Life Paulagics is organizing a pelagic trip from Lewes, Delaware for Sunday, April 24.

Information on how to register, make hotel reservations (if needed), submit papers for presentation, and obtain more information about attending the sessions and other events can be found at the WOS meeting web site: www.ummz.lsa.umich.edu/birds/pdf/wos-ann2004.pdf. Persons who do not have Internet access at home or work should visit a library to reach this site. Otherwise, they may email or call Jay Sheppard (jmsheppar@aol.com; 301-725-5559) for a copy to be sent to them. (Please leave your address and phone number on the answering machine.)

Persons who plan to participate in the meeting are urged to register



and to make hotel reservations promptly. DEADLINES: Student Travel Award Application—1 March. Call for Papers—18 March. Early Registration—21 March (\$125, \$165 after that date for non-students). Room reservations at group rate—21 March. Registration for the meeting includes a reception at the hotel on Thursday evening, poster reception on Friday evening, and coffee breaks. Buffet breakfasts and lunches will be available at the hotel, where the banquet will also be held on Saturday evening.

Research Grants

MOS is offering grants for ornithological research conducted in the state of Maryland. Grants are generally limited to \$2,000. If the research is to be done at or near one of the MOS sanctuaries, the Society may be able to provide accommodations at a nominal cost.

Proposals are reviewed twice annually; the next deadline is June 1. Notification of awards is typically made in eight weeks.

For application guidelines and further information, contact Gwen Brewer, MOS Research Committee, 9505 Bland St, Waldorf, MD 20603, or glbrewer@comcast.net.

MAY COUNT 2005!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SATURDAY, MAY 14

Spring migration is a good time for taking inventory of how many birds of each species are found across Maryland. To compare trends in species populations from year to year, a specific 24-hour point in time is chosen for conducting a statewide count. This effort is known as May Count, and it is held the second Saturday of May each year. This year, May Count will take place on Saturday, May 14.

May Count is conducted statewide by volunteers—people who, like you, enjoy birding and spending a day outdoors. There is no requirement regarding birding skill levels, so anyone interested in participating for all, most, or part of the day, don't be bashful! We welcome your help wholeheartedly. The more volunteers, the better the coverage that can be achieved.

For those who are new to the concept of May Count, and/or are interested in participating for the first time, there are contacts and forms to make the count simple and fun. Each County has an assigned compiler, who can provide you with maps of territories that need coverage, and who will provide guidance on how the count is conducted. The list of 2004 County compilers is available at the MOS web site (www.mdbirds.org/counts/namc/namc.html). A list of 2005 County Compilers and a field checklist for species seen during May Count will be printed in the May/June issue of the *Yellowthroat*.

Due to the rural nature and smaller populations of the Eastern Shore, counties there need additional assistance



*Cattle Egret gets a lift from a friend.
Photo taken at Assateague Island by Suzanne Probst.*

with May Count. There are many miles of wonderful habitat that need coverage, so if you are feeling adventurous and would like to explore new territory, please consider crossing the Bay Bridge to offer your help in those counties.

We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your effort in this worthwhile effort!

—Wanda Diane Cole
Statewide Coordinator

Patuxent Showcases Sibley

David Allen Sibley will be the Featured Artist/Author at the upcoming 16th Annual Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale, April 1-3 at the National Wildlife Visitor Center, Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel.

Sibley will conduct a book-signing on Friday, April 1, at the Artists' Reception (tickets for this evening reception are \$30 per person) and from 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday, April 2, the first day of the public show. (Admission to the art show is free.) He will possibly be involved in other activities of the art show on Saturday, including judging the Maryland Duck Stamp Competition and giving a lecture in the state-of-the-art auditorium of the National Wildlife Visitor Center.

Patuxent's 12,750 acres between Baltimore and Washington are very special in the National Wildlife Refuge System. It was here that Rachel Carson did much of the research leading to the 1962 publication of *Silent Spring*. It is here that researchers manage the captive breeding colony of the endangered Whooping Crane (*Grus americana*). Here is where researchers are conducting studies of migratory waterfowl populations and environmental toxicity. Here is where Chan Robbins works.

—Jerry Persall, Chairperson
Patuxent Wildlife Art Show and Sale

MY EDUCATION IN MAINE

BY COLLEEN WEBSTER

The mind lives on the heart—Emily Dickinson

Before I even departed for Hog Island, Maine, I had so much to learn. As an English professor come late to the study of natural history, I've been playing catch-up for three years now, birding with experts, hiking with naturalists. But mostly I've been reading. It's what I do best, so it's what I did to prepare for my trip six states north. I read about the geologic events that created the rocky points that jutted out of the water along the state's southern coast, how their thin soil now supported few trees outside of spruce and evergreens. I read about the tidal pool homes of various rockweed, arthropods, sea stars, eels, crabs, and other shellfish. I read about Hog Island's human history of hosting pigs for early settlers' food supply when it was too cold to harvest fish and lobster and the rocky land prevented successful farming. I read about Mabel Loomis Todd who summered on this 333-acre spot of forest and determined to leave it to a conservation group that would ensure its preservation. I read about John Wortman, birder and naturalist, whose memorial scholarship had been bestowed on me by the Maryland Ornithological Society to attend this Natural History of the Coast of Maine camp run by Audubon Maine. Lastly, I read directions and maps, loaded my car, and headed north.

The 11-hour journey gave me much anticipation time. From the information packet I sensed I was going to love this whole week; the What-to-Bring list specified nothing electric: no hair dryers, radios, or TVs. A whole week free of references to reality shows, rock celebrities, and the latest hair-do trends? True nirvana for this anti-pop-culture soul. All the words of great naturalist writers rang through my thoughts. I realized I was not striking rough camp in the wilderness, but I did feel I was going, as Henry David Thoreau wrote, "to learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an

infinite expectation of the dawn."

I was looking forward to expertly led walks, lectures, expeditions, and good old camp camaraderie, grown-up style. I had no idea how truly unprepared I was to have my expectations surpassed.

The hilly terrain, light fog, and sea air welcomed me at the boat dock for the trip from the mainland. As my bags were loaded onto the transport boat, I received my name tag and peered through a scope at my first life bird of the stay, a Black Guillemot, calmly bobbing among the lobster trap buoys. Minutes later, the group of arriving campers boarded the *Puffin IV* only to disembark a few hundred yards away. Sheets and towels all around and we tramped off to various accommodations, mine being the distant Crows' Nest, an open cabin slowly filling with single women. Later, after the first of many fresh, homemade dinners, all 43 campers immersed themselves in their first activity: preparing various rockweeds to be pressed onto watercolor paper, cooking down some to thicken vanilla pudding, adding some to cucumber for seaweed salad.

Over the next few days, we walked a bird trail originally taken by Hog Island's first ornithology teacher, Roger Tory Peterson; I tried to feel his painterly empathy with the nesting Eastern Kingbird, the flitting Ruby-throated Hummingbird. I imagined the Osprey we saw were descendants of those saved by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, her wake-up call to the effects of DDT. We hiked to a cabin where Mabel Loomis Todd worked on the first three editions of poems by her Amherst neighbor, Emily Dickinson. I never stopped seeing, from Harris's Checkerspot butterflies to the little cone middens of buzzy red squirrels.

All in all, we spent the week watching birds, or rather looking for them, at 6

each morning, hearing all five of the island's breeding warblers and seeing many of them: Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Yellow-rumped, Northern Parula, and Magnolia. We climbed rocky shores and waded in the bay to find fish, crabs, mussels, dogwhelk, and periwinkles. We learned about butterfly mimicry, the migration of monarchs, and our human way of tagging and tracking their yearly orange streams north and south. We devoured cookies hot from the oven after standing in fields catching and identifying insects, examining frogs and young eels from the far-off Sargasso Sea. We learned the significance of each cup of coffee, its relation to the Amazon Rainforest and the wintering grounds of so many of our own summering warblers and other passerines. We boated through Muscungus Bay to visit now-famous Eastern Egg Rock, an eight-acre island where Atlantic Puffins have been reintroduced, and nest, by pioneering Steve Kress and his team of steadfast workers.

On our last night, drinking wine and eating lobster, we stood around on the still-wet grass and watched the sun slipping down over what Maine writer Sarah Orne Jewett called *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. We had become quite a talkative, chummy crew, from the 20-somethings who work as Park Naturalists, to the Moms taking some time for themselves, to the couples enjoying a learning vacation. One couple was even there as a gift from their children and grandchildren, celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary. We had come from Florida, Connecticut, Washington state, Ohio, New York, from jobs, from families, from houses with the demands of daily duty. Some of us had never seen a warbler, some could bird by ear, some hated bugs, some willingly placed butterflies on our noses. But no matter our starting place, together, we learned so much from phenomenal instructors who never failed to inspire.

I am not sure what the other 42 took home, but I know what is etched in my bones, in my awareness. The sound of a Black-throated Green warbler singing away at the foggy stillness, the serene presence of Seabird Sue who spent five summers on Egg Rock monitoring puffins, the green significance of ferns, lichen, and moss, the relaxed exuberance of Mark who reels off insect orders and swings his butterfly net, the quiet circle of kingfisher feathers left by a hawk's kill, the perseverance of Bonnie who has returned to Ecuador for 18 years to study the rainforest birds, carrying what Terry Tempest Williams calls "the grief that dares us to love once more," the call of a solitary loon amid morning lobster boats, the patience of Tom answering each of my myriad questions ("Yes, Colleen, the oscines can learn songs") with detail and care, the glaring whiteness of a Roseate Tern as it returns to its nest. I have learned to see more in this world and to love it better. I learned I have a lot more to learn, but realize I am rewarded already when I remember Maine writer Henry Beston's words from 80 years ago: "The world today is sick to its thin blood for lack of elemental things, for fire before the hands, for water welling from the earth, for air, for the dear earth itself underfoot." I may not have lived alone on the Cape Cod shore for a year, but I went to a cabin on an island and I forged a bridge from the wild to my tame heart. I am so grateful for this thickening of my blood that I will be a long time leading others to wildness.

Colleen Webster is an English professor at Harford Community College. She was awarded the MOS John Wortman Memorial Scholarship and attended Natural History of the Maine Coast at Hog Island, Maine last summer. Colleen has become an avid birder and strives to include as much nature literature as possible in her courses.

MOS CONFERENCE 2005 MAY 20-22 SOLOMONS, CALVERT COUNTY

Preparations for our 2005 conference are well under way. By now you should have received your conference registration brochure in the mail, thanks to the work of **Helen Patton** and **Gemma Radko**. If not, contact me to receive the brochure, or print a copy from our MOS website.

I am very pleased to announce that our Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project and the Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Educational Center will share proceeds from the Silent Auction and Raffle. In a small way, this shows support for and appreciation of the work done by **Jane Coskren**, chair, and members of the Atlas Committee. **Walter Ellison's** role as Atlas Coordinator has inspired and impressed many of us.

The Nanjemoy Environmental Education Center is a Charles County Public School site staffed by three naturalists and a facilities manager. Among various programs, they host the overnight environmental education field trip for approximately 1,500 fifth graders each year. The Director, **Paula Batzer**, is a former MOS Scholarship winner. **Mike Callahan**, former Conference Committee Chair, is also on the Nanjemoy staff.

Peter Hanan (peter.hanan@comcast.net) is busy organizing the field trips. He has arranged for one or perhaps more trips to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station (PRNAS). Because only a limited number of spaces are available, participation will be determined by lottery. Lottery winners will be asked to provide their name, address, date and place of birth, and Social Security number. If you are interested, be sure to circle *yes* in the appropriate place on your registration brochure. Be advised that due to security concerns this trip could be cancelled by PRNAS at any time. Anyone willing to lead a field trip who has not yet been contacted, please email Peter. All help is appreciated.

As customary, **Dale Johnson** (ckadj@juno.com) is putting together an Artists' Display. This year the display will keep longer hours in order to accommodate more people. **Maryanne Dolan** (abtrowbridge@msn.com) is always looking for items for the Silent Auction and Raffle; check her *Yellowthroat* article to see some of her innovative ideas. Volunteers are still needed to help with the Silent Auction and Artists' Display.

The Conference Committee is looking forward to an exciting and interesting time in Southern Maryland. We hope you will join us.

—Janet Shields
janetbill@prodigy.net

THE OUTERMOST HOUSE

BY BEN POSCOVER

I was fortunate to have been a recipient of an MOS scholarship to an Audubon camp in 1973, and I elected to attend the camp on Hog Island, off the coast of the picturesque Maine town of Damariscotta. For two weeks, we studied the ecologies of a boreal forest, beach, intertidal zone, bay, and barrier islands. Steven Kress, who was on the staff, was just beginning his project of reintroducing the Atlantic Puffin to islands that they had previously used for nesting. What I learned at the camp could immediately be applied in my classroom, in working with teachers, and in my own enjoyment. My birding skills improved exponentially.

Among many memorable experiences, the one that seems to remain in sharpest focus was the introduction of two books, one of which was Henry Beston's *The Outermost House*. (The other was *Last of the Curlews* by Fred Bodsworth.) Henry Beston was a writer, lecturer, and college teacher. In 1924 he acquired land south of the Eastham Life

Saving Station facing the Atlantic Ocean on the outermost dunes on Cape Cod. He designed and built a two-room cottage which he named the Fo'castle. In 1925, intending to spend a two-week vacation, he extended his stay for an entire year. This book is the result of that experience.

Beston was a superb craftsman. His wife said that he would sometimes spend as much as a half day working on a single sentence. He wrote of the sea, the sand, the wind, the stars, the flora, the fauna, and the coast guardsmen. He wrote of the beach at night and in the day, and of the seasons. One approaches the reading of this book as one faces a fine wine, sipping it over time savoring each drop. One reviewer called *The Outermost House* the best book on nature ever written. I have read it twice in its entirety and parts of it many times.

In 1964, the Fo'castle was declared a National Literary Landmark. A huge winter storm washed it away in

1978. With erosion of the beach over time, the site of the "Outermost House" now lies several hundred yards out to sea.

The back cover of the MOS Sanctuary Handbook carries the following words of Henry Beston:

"Do no dishonour to the earth lest you dishonour the spirit of man. Hold your hands out over the earth as over a flame. To all who love her, who open to her the doors of their veins, she gives of her strength, sustaining them with her own measureless tremour of dark life. Touch the earth, love the earth, honour the earth, her plains, her valleys, her hills, and her seas; rest your spirit in her solitary places. For the gifts of life are the earth's and they are given to all, and they are the songs of birds at daybreak, Orion and the Bear, and dawn seen over the ocean from the beach."

Ben Poscover is a member of the Baltimore Bird Club

2005-2006 NOMINEES

Each of the current officers has agreed to run again. Thus, the MOS Nominating Committee proposes the following slate of nominees for 2005-2006. These names will be presented to the membership for election at the Annual Business Meeting during this year's MOS Conference. Additional nominees may be presented at the meeting by the membership, as long as the nominee is in agreement.

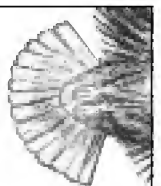
President	Janet Millenson
Vice President	Marcia Balestri
Secretary	Janet Shields
Treasurer	Emmalyn Holdridge

—Al Haury, Nominating Committee Chair

Telling Tales

During one of the Lapwing lulls, a small group of searchers clustered along Graceham Rd, checking the hay-bale field in vain. All told, about eight cars, plus people and scopes, were half blocking the lane, when a sheriff's car pulled up. Rolling down the window, the lawman wanted to know, "Has anyone seen the bird?"

—John Fox



BOOK REVIEW:**On the Wing: To the Edge of the Earth with the Peregrine Falcon by Alan Tennant**

Knopf, 2004

This exciting, strange, compelling, and yet worrying book is at heart the adventure tale of two compulsive misfits swept up in an all-consuming passion to find out just where migrating Peregrine Falcons travel. Author Alan Tennant, a middle-aged man who has wanted since childhood to soar with the birds, is willing to sacrifice

almost anything, including his long-suffering girlfriend, to be able to track falcons. The other, George Vose, is a grizzled former WW II combat pilot who utterly failed to settle down in life after the war. George keeps several bottles of gin behind the seats of his rickety Cessna Skyhawk, and he is never happier than when shooting the bull with an admiring set of listeners.

Alan and George are misfits all right, and the book delights in describing their relationships with other cranky characters. They are not popular with officialdom—the U.S. Army, which for some obscure reason funded some early work on radio-tracking falcons, wants to shut them down, or with the law—the Royal Canadian Mounted Police fines them severely for entering Canada without a permit. (These two are not the type to even think about seeking official permission.)

The narrative is full of vignettes featuring colorful real-life personalities, ranging from somnolent caretakers of seldom-used airstrips to frighteningly real bandits and corrupt Mexican soldiers. One of the Mounties who just fined them all the money they carry quietly slips them a couple of bills so they won't be totally destitute—a nice human touch to a story that consistently values falcons a lot higher than it does people.

Overlying this rollicking tale are a number of much more serious motifs. A succession of mini-essays peppers the main

narrative. Some cover the history of Peregrine tracking; one describes the fascinating history of the sport of falconry; others (and these are among the finest pieces in the book) describe how a Peregrine's eyes work, how it feeds, what locations it chooses to spend the night, why it fears as a predator only the Great Horned Owl.

Sometimes the book takes on a herky-jerky feel as the sweep of the narrative is interrupted by a historical note or personal reflection. Such is Tennant's skill as a writer, though, that he pulls you along with him. You experience the visceral thrill as he fits a fighting-mad falcon with a radio transmitter, then hurls it back into its element, the sky. You feel with Alan and George the pangs of disappointment when they realize that they have lost contact with a falcon they've tracked for more than a thousand miles. Then you share with them the overwhelming joy and relief when, against all odds, they find it again.

Tennant was a vet by training, and his understanding and deep love of animals suffuses the book. But there is no disguising the fact that he is pessimistic about the long-term prospects facing wild creatures. He views mankind's stupidity, greed, and thoughtlessness as beyond the pale. Some of his descriptions of man-made environmental changes that threaten birds of prey worldwide are truly harrowing.

One last thought: this is not a book for white-knuckle flyers. Beset by balky carburetors, faulty magnetos, nonfunctioning fuel valves, water-tainted aviation fuel, and a terrible penchant for flying into bad weather, George's plane is never far from becoming a heap of smoking wreckage. So don't read this book on a plane, as I did. But do read it—it's a roller-coaster ride with a very serious message.

— *Michael Bowen, Montgomery Bird Club*

Conference: Posters Wanted

Again this year, the MOS Research Committee will sponsor poster presentations during the Conference's Wine and Cheese Social on Saturday evening. Researchers presenting posters are encouraged to be on hand to field questions about their work.

If you would like to share the results of your studies on the natural history of Maryland bird life—banding activities, hawk watches, small research projects—please take advantage of this opportunity. Contact Gwen Brewer, committee chair, as soon as possible (glbrewer@comcast.net or 301-843-3524).



THE YEAR OF THE OWLS

You've probably read about the unprecedented numbers of owls invading Minnesota, Michigan, and several other northern states this winter. This phenomenon drew at least 13 Maryland birders north for the owl experience of a lifetime.

Cathy Gagliardi, a Minnesotan birder, reported sightings as far south as the Twin Cities; a couple of Great Grays traveled into Iowa, as well. Birders have come from all over the US and even China. According to Mark Alt, President of the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union (MOU), the 2004-2005 season has brought over 1,300 reports of Great Gray Owls (NBC News put the number at more than 2,000), 200 Northern Hawk Owls, and 300 Boreal Owls. This compares to last year's more typical numbers of 35 GGOW, 6 NHOW, and 1 BOOW.

Probably the main reason for this surge of owls has to do with food source. GGOW and NHOW rely on voles for the major part of their diet; when rodent populations crash, this exerts stress on the owls. Dr. James Duncan of Winnipeg has monitored small mammal populations in the Roseau Bog area of northwestern Minnesota since 1986. In the fall of 2004, their numbers were the lowest recorded since 1992—a year that brought a record number of 196 GGOW and 142 NHOW in Minnesota.

The first Great Gray Owl sightings in 2004 were called in to the MOU Rare Bird Alert on August 17. The first report of Northern Hawk Owl was October 3. Banders of Boreal Owls along Lake Superior's north shore banded their first Boreal Owl on October 17.

Many birders focused on areas of the vast Sax-Zim Bog northwest of Duluth, the town of Twin Harbors northeast of Duluth, and Route 7.

Denise Ryan (Montgomery Bird Club):

At the lighthouse at Two Harbors, Denise encountered eight Great Gray Owls along a three-block stretch of trail overlooking Lake Superior, sunning themselves at dawn. She found a single Boreal Owl being chased by a large flock of Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches. The Boreal Owl displayed its amazing ability to camouflage itself by flying under snow-laden spruce boughs and even used patches of snow to hide its obvious face and facial disk from those chickadees.

John Gilbert was impressed with the typical -40° daytime temperature:

"The cold was an experience in its own right, and held the snow in place across the stunning boreal landscape, with low winter sun contributing to spectacular scenery the whole time. While we didn't see a big number of species (it was amazing that birds such as chickadees were still hanging on in the frozen north!), we did see single Barred and Boreal Owls, plus Black-backed Woodpecker, Ruffed Grouse (including one at close range eating berries in a suburban garden!), Bohemian Waxwings, and Pine Grosbeaks. Each day we were seeing up to 36 Great Gray Owls and seven Northern Hawk Owls—before lunch. Unbelievable when you would normally have to try hard and be lucky to see one of either of these stunning creatures in a year!"

Dan and Georgia McDonald and Gail Frantz (Baltimore Bird Club):

"At the end of each day, birders tallied Great Gray Owls in the dozens and Northern Hawk Owls by the half-dozen. Since Boreal Owls were not stressed enough to be hunting during the day, they were more difficult to find and counted by ones.

"We were told there were 4 BOOWs in a particular Twin Harbor neighborhood. That evening, while we were criss-crossing the streets at dusk, one of the elusive BOOWs flew in front of our car and landed

in a fir tree in a small yard. We parked and walked over to the tree. Two crows startled us when they flew out unexpectedly. Didn't bother the owl though; he remained perched where we could easily see him.

"We observed an exciting chase by a Northern Shrike who fancied a Snow Bunting for an evening meal, but we were unable to see if the bunting made a get-away. Another day, from the warmth of our rented van, we enjoyed watching a lovely Boreal Chickadee along with at least a dozen Pine Grosbeaks at a feeder."

Sarah Anderson describes her terrific spur-of-the-moment owl viewing and photographing trip. "I had just two days and I concentrated on seeing owls. It was a tough call to make; once I got there I wanted to see everything! I targeted three different areas, and I located Great Grays and Northern Hawk Owl (a life bird!!). In Twin Harbors, I found a Common Goldeneye and, at the lighthouse next to the jetty, a Harlequin Duck.

"Then, as if the owls weren't enough excitement, we went back to St. Paul and went to the Winter Carnival. Spent several hours admiring the ice sculptures and the snow sculptures; the artists were still at work on the snow sculptures." *Check out Sarah's MN pics at <http://www.pbse.com/sarahbee/mnjan2005>*

Canada served up some owls, too: For those birders unable to make the Minnesota trip, balmy Ontario (35°) worked out just fine for five more Baltimore Bird Club members. **Steve Sanford accompanied Paul Noel and Mark Linardi** on a Jan 28 weekend. THE VERY NEXT WEEKEND, **Steve** made the 12-hour trip once again, this time with **Joel Martin and Gail Frantz**. Both Mark and Joel saw at least three life owls each. The striking beauty and grace of these birds will never be forgotten.

Anne Arundel Bird Club

Janelle Dietrich enjoyed a three-week trip to Antarctica, South Georgia, and the Falkland Islands. Her large group included 200 birders. They enjoyed areas of the Antarctic peninsula and viewed hundreds of pelagic birds, including at least 11 species. Janelle added the Magellanic Penguin for her sixth species of penguin, and 48 new species for her life list. A Blue-eyed Shag brought her life list to 700! Congratulations, Janelle!

Caroline County Bird Club Christmas Count

Caroline County Bird Club's Christmas Bird Count on December 18 had a final total of 91 species. "A couple of highlights were Blue-winged Teal and Bufflehead. Debby Bennett and party were quite delighted to get American Pipits for the count. Steve Westre said they are not uncommon on the count, but Debby was still happy about their find.

"A couple of years ago we had 98 species on the count. Steve still laments the fact that we have not yet broken the 100-species mark. Steve has high hopes that we'll reach or break 100 someday—when all the stars and planets are aligned."—*Danny Poet*

New member for the Carroll County Bird Club

Tammy Schwaab, president of Carroll County Bird Club, and her husband Mark had a baby girl November 23. The baby's name is Sophia Rose. Tammy reports that "Sophia was almost eight pounds at birth and is now almost thirteen! She is a big girl." Tammy and Mark have been "out of the birding world" for a bit. We're betting they'll be back on the trail by spring migration.

In the News: Talbot County Bird Club

The Talbot County Chapter recently received some well-written publicity through their local newspaper, the *Easton Star-Democrat*.

"The paper's nature writer, Anne Stinson, interviewed Talbot Chapter members Bill Novak and myself for the story.

She then put together a very informative article, emphasizing the results of the St. Michaels Christmas Count but also touching on many other important themes dear to the heart of birders.

"Possibly because of direct interest of the managing editor, the entire front page of the Life Section (Section C) was dedicated to this story. A beautiful half-page color photo of a male Cardinal devouring a sunflower seed on snow-covered ground was used to help attract attention of all readers, birders and non-birders alike.

"The Easton newspaper already has established a good record of cooperating with birders, by timely publishing club meetings and outings. Perhaps this attractive special article will inspire a few more people to join the Talbot Chapter, as well as to become more active in seeking and enjoying the birds."—*Les Roslund*

Birds of Note

From Phil Davis, secretary of the records committee: "Just to make it official, the MD/DC Records Committee (MD/DCRC) has reviewed, accepted, and added Cackling Goose to the Official List of Birds of Maryland."

From Fran Saunders, keeper of Maryland's All-Species List: "The MD list of all species reported for 2004 ended with a whopping 350" for a percentage of 82.9, plus possible new species including Cave Swallow and Calliope Hummingbird. In DC, the Annual Species List, maintained by **John Hubbell**, ended up with 214 species, plus 3 possible additions: Rufous Hummingbird, Thayer's Gull, and Brown Pelican.

The MOS Raffle Wants YOU!

Do you have a talent you are willing to share? Perhaps you would be willing to donate a half-day (or even a full day) to showing off your favorite birding spots. Maybe you love to cook and would be willing to donate a lunch or dinner for a couple or two. Or your desserts are to-die-for. No need to stop there. Put on your thinking-cap and come up with a creative item to donate to the Raffle. Proceeds go to a good cause, and you would have 12 months to negotiate a convenient time for the winner to claim the prize.

Remember, birders are a very undemanding group. We like pretty much everything.

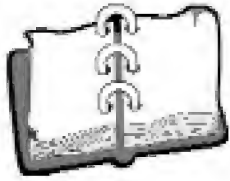
If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer a prize to the Raffle, please contact me at abtrowbridge@msn.com, at 202-483-8188, or by mail at 1705 Lanier Place NW, Apt 306, Washington, DC 20009.

See you at the Conference.

Maryanne Dolan
Silent Auction/Raffle Coordinator



*Osprey by
Gemma Radko*



MOS Calendar

March-April 2005

Tuesday, March 1

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evenings at Cylburn Mansion (off Greenspring Ave, 1 block S of Northern Pkwy). 7 PM for refreshments and socializing. Lecture 7:45-9 PM. "Walk on the Wild Side, Part II" by *Kathy Woods*, state and federally licensed wildlife rehabilitator.

Wednesday, March 2

MEETING. Carroll. Meet 7:30 PM Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. *Dave Brinker* will present program regarding Goshawks. Info/contact: Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

🦋 **Baltimore.** First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Meet just past statue of Orpheus. Continuing survey of bird activity at Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Thursday, March 3

MEETING. Anne Arundel. Richard E. Heise, Jr. Annual Wildlife Lecture. *Chan Robbins* will relate "What I Have Learned from 100,000 Net-Hours of Backyard Bird Banding." 8 PM Quiet Waters Park, Hillsmere Drive, Annapolis. Please note that a donation at the door will be appreciated, with the proceeds going to support the MD/DC Atlas Project. Hosts: Hal Wierenga, Lynn Davidson, Sally Rowe, and Sue Ricciardi.

MEETING. Frederick. *Wil Hershberger* will discuss "Birds of Arizona and New Mexico." Meet 7 PM C. Burr Artz Library. Info: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098.

Saturday, March 5

🦋 **Anne Arundel.** Beverly Triton Beach Park for late winter woodland birds, waterfowl. Half day. Meet 8 AM Parole P&R. Leader: Al Haury, 410-923-0881.

🦋 **Frederick.** Timberdoodles at Audrey Carroll. Doug Parker will lead search for American Woodcock. Last year we had excellent looks, displaying and on ground, feeding. Meet 5:30 PM Rte 75 P&R just south of I-70. Bring flashlight. Info: Doug, 301-663-1909.

🦋 **Cecil.** Horsehead Wetlands Center for waterfowl and spring migrants. Fee waived if you bring MOS membership card. Half day. Meet Big Elk Mall Dunkin Donuts parking area 7:30 AM. Leaders: Rick and Candi Lee, 410-287-0415.

🦋 **Patuxent.** Meet 7:30 AM Fran Uhler Natural Area, end of Lemon Bridge Rd, off Laurel-Bowie Rd (MD 197) north of Bowie College and MARC line. 3 hours. Info: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

🦋 **Kent.** Eastern Neck NWR for winter waterfowl and land birds. Half day. Meet Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown, 8 AM. Info: Walter Ellison or Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

🦋 **Harford.** Muddy Run WMA. Three-quarters day to southern Lancaster Co, PA hotspot along Susquehanna River, which has recorded over 250 bird species. Something rare shows up nearly every year, but among many birds to expect are Common Loon, Snow Goose, Bald Eagle, American Pipit, Fox Sparrow. Bring lunch and meet 7 AM MD 543 and I-65 P&R. Info/Leader: Russ Kovach, 443-386-4787.

🦋 **Montgomery.** Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Relatively new (and very birdy) site. Waterproof boots essential. Meet 7:30 AM Zion Rd parking lot. Limited to 8-10 participants. Call Leader: Rick Sussman,

301-774-1185, for reservations/directions.

Sunday, March 6

🦋 **Baltimore.** Loch Raven. Meet 8 AM for waterfowl and land birds. Possible Bald Eagles and bluebirds. Scopes useful. Two-mile, level walk. Beginning birders welcome. All cars must park on same side of road. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771.

🦋 **Talbot.** Bennett Point Freshwater Wetlands and Grasslands. Breakfast Hosts: Margaret and Erney Maher. Meet 7 AM Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot front of Acme, Easton. Leader: Scott Crabtree, 410-643-3237, crabtree@myshorelink.com.

Tuesday, March 8

MEETING. Allegany. *Liz McDowell* of Elkridge Nature Works will present "Native Plants: A Welcome Sign for Wildlife." Learn to use native species to attract wildlife and have beautiful, natural, native gardens. Meet 7 PM Frostburg Public Library, 65 E. Main St. Info: Barbara Gaffney, 301-895-4646.

Wednesday, March 9

🦋 **Baltimore.** Hampton National Historic Site. First year monitoring this interesting site. Explore 70 acres of woods, fields, pasture land, and formal gardens. Easy walking. Canceled in bad weather. Meet at Site 8 AM for 3 hours. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Thursday, March 10

MEETING. Howard. *Dennis Coskren* will present "Travels in Peru: Birds and More" at 8 PM, Howard Co Rec & Parks Dept, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM. Info: Jeff Freidhoffer, 410-997-5336.

MEETING. Talbot. *Elizabeth Beggins*, Owner, Pot Pie Farm, presents "Organic Gardening at Pot Pie Farm: A Spiritual Experience." Meet 7:30 PM Easton Welcome Center, upstairs.

🦋 indicates Field Trips

Friday, March 11

🦋 **Montgomery.** McKee-Breshers WMA. Half or full day. Wintering land birds, lingering waterfowl, early migrants. **Part 1:** Meet 7 AM Seneca parking lot/Riley's Lock Rd. Bird various spots until 1:30, lunch in Poolesville. Bring snack, beverage, and spotting scope if you have one. **Part 2:** 3:30 PM until dusk. Meet Potomac River end of Sycamore Landing Rd. Leader will attempt to find American Woodcock display (not expected to be usual fields off River and Hughes Rds due to planting); bring flashlight. Both parts can involve wet, muddy conditions, so wear proper footwear. Reservations required for both full and half-day options. Leader: Jim Green, 301-208-2393.

Saturday, March 12

MEETING. **MOS STATE BOARD.** 10 AM. Baltimore. Fort McHenry.

🦋 **Carroll.** Birding at Point Lookout SP and Sandgates for Gannets, Kelp Gull. For info and meeting time and location, contact coordinator: Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

🦋 **Cecil.** Waterfowl, various Cecil Co locations. Meet North East Plaza parking lot 8 AM for half day. Leader: Chris Starling, 410-287-4223.

🦋 **Baltimore.** Poplar Island. Meet 7:30 AM Nursery Rd/Hammonds Ferry Rd P&R, or 9:30 AM at Tilghman Island. Environmental restoration project similar to Hart-Miller. When completed, it will provide approx. 570 acres of wetland and 570 acres of upland habitat. Half-hour boat ride from Tilghman Island. For approx. 2 hours bus will drive around island, stopping wherever birding looks good. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Bring snacks. Lunch at local restaurant. Reservations required. Leader: Chrissy Albanese. Coordinator: Gail Frantz, 410-833-7135.

🦋 **Frederick.** Black Hill RP, Montgomery Co. Waterfowl, late winter birds, and early spring migrants. Meet 7:30 AM Urbana P&R, South lot. Call Gary Smyle, 301-663-0055, for info.

🦋 **Montgomery.** Jug Bay, Prince George's Co. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Possible Rusty Blackbirds, migrating Wilson's Snipe, and courtship display of Osprey. Meet 8 AM. Call leader for details and driving instructions. Check ANS News for more information. Reservations required. Leader: John Bjerke, 301-963-8525.

🦋 **Patuxent.** Meet 4:30 AM Bowie P&R for trip to Wooten's Landing for woodcock and owls. Leader: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

🦋 **Howard.** Waterfowl Search. 8 AM-2 PM Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Columbia lakes and possible western ponds and Triadelphia Reservoir for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterbirds. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Call Stan Arnold for info, 410-768-0155.

Sunday, March 13

🦋 **Baltimore.** Middle Creek WMA. Meet 8 AM for all-day trip to major gathering place north of Lancaster, PA for Snow Geese and other waterfowl. Excellent display of mounted birds in Visitor Center. Note: Trip may go elsewhere if Middle Creek is frozen over. Meet Timonium P&R on Greenspring Drive/Deerco Rd off Timonium Rd, east of I-83. Leader: Steve Sanford, 410-922-5103.

🦋 **Anne Arundel.** Wooten's Landing for woodcocks. Breakfast TBA. Half day. Meet 4:30 AM Parole P&R. Leader: Kathie Lambert, 410-867-4056.

🦋 **Talbot.** Oxford and environs. Waterfowl, gannets, and early migrants. Breakfast Hosts: Nancy and Bernie Burns. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot front of Acme, Easton 7 AM. Leader: Les Coble, 410-820-6165.

🦋 **Harford.** Waterfowl Tour. Marvel at thousands of Lesser Scaup and search for species tough to find locally, such as Surf Scoter, Redhead, Long-tailed Duck, Northern

Shoveler. Beginners interested in learning basics of waterfowl ID and experienced watchers searching for rarities will enjoy this trip to Gunpowder River and Havre de Grace. Meet 6 AM back lot Rte 40 McDonald's, Edgewood. Leader: Dave Webb, 410-939-3537.

🦋 **Tri-County.** Sunday "Chase Trip" to wherever best birds are being seen in lower DE and Eastern Shore. Full day. Meet 7:30 AM Asbury UMC north parking lot, Salisbury. Bring lunch/snack/drink. Leader: Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497.

Monday, March 14

MEETING. **Talbot.** *Walter Ellison*, Chair, MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project, presents "What we have learned from the MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project." Meet 7:30 PM, Easton Welcome Center.

Tuesday, March 15

MEETING. **Kent.** *Jim McCann* of DNR will speak on "Threatened and Endangered Species in Maryland." Meet 7:30 PM Kent County Library, Chestertown. Info: Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

🦋 **Howard.** Evening with the Woodcock. Time and meeting place TBA. 1.5-2 hrs. Ages 12 to adult. Join naturalist Sue Muller to listen for displaying American Woodcock at Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. Minimal walking. Wear dark clothing and bring flashlight. Call Sue, 301-498-8462, to reserve. Limit 15. No facilities.

Wednesday, March 16

🦋 **Harford.** Timberdoodle Watch. First in pair of evening trips designed to take you into mating arena of one of North America's most bizarre birds, American Woodcock, a seemingly confused and exceedingly plump little shorebird that prefers wooded fields and forest. Hear them call and watch them spring into mating ritual. Meet 6 PM east end Aberdeen Wal-Mart parking lot. Leader: John Gallo, 410-459-0548.

(MOS Calendar continues on page 14)

MOS Calendar (continued from page 13)**Thursday, March 17**

MEETING. **Caroline.** "Update on Maryland's Breeding Bird Atlas" by *Diane Cole*. Meet 7:30 PM Caroline County Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, March 19

Kent. Chesapeake Farms area. Half day. Meet Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown, 8 AM. Info: Walter Ellison or Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Anne Arundel. Smithsonian Research Center for woodland birds and waterfowl. Half day. Meet 8 AM Parole P&R parking lot. Leader: Paul Fofonoff, 410-867-7971.

Patuxent. Meet 7:30 Governor's Bridge Park for foray to nearby birding spots as recent sightings dictate. Info: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

Cecil. Blackwater NWR and Beyond. Full day. Meet 6 AM Big Elk Mall Dunkin Donuts parking area. Leader: Sean McCandless, 410-392-3407.

Harford. Perryman and Forest Greens. Explore locally popular destination known for large fields and bayside access. Visit large wildlife pond and vernal woodland of Forest Greens Property, another preservation project precipitated by the Harford Land Trust. Timing of trip presents great opportunity to find Wilson's Snipe, Horned Lark, American Pipit, Savannah Sparrow, and good mix of puddle ducks. Meet 7 AM Roy Williams ES. Leaders: Dennis Kirkwood and Lynn Davis, 410-692-5905.

Baltimore. Fort McHenry. 8 AM-Noon. Bird activity at Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Sunday, March 20

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. Meet at Mansion's front porch Sunday mornings for series of easy birding in gardens and urban forest.

Beginning birders welcome. Expect variety of migrant and resident birds. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834, ilenel@juno.com.

Howard. Centennial Park. 8 AM west end parking lot. Early swallows, Caspian Terns, and ducks likely. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643.

Talbot. Easton Waste Water Treatment Plant. Breakfast Host: Sue Ormsby. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot front of Acme, Easton 7 AM. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-822-8132.

Monday-Friday, March 21-25

Frederick. Canopy Tower, Panama. Join us for tropical birding at Canopy Tower in Panama. Limited slots. Contact Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098, for info.

Tuesday, March 22

MEETING. **Washington.** "Bald Eagles in MD" presented by DNR biologist *Glenn Therres*. Meet 7:30 PM at Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454, for info.

Howard. David Force Park. 8-10 AM. Meet at sign on Pebble Beach Dr. Easy walk through wooded trails and fields of Howard Co open space. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. Listen for Spring Peepers and look for wild-flowers. Probable Pileated Woodpecker, Wood Ducks, and Fox Sparrows. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057.

Wednesday, March 23

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. See March 9.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program by *David Curson* of Audubon MD-DC. Meet 7 PM Elkton HS media center, Elkton. Refreshments. Info: Rick Lee, 410-287-0415.

Harford. Timberdoodle Watch. Second evening trip to observe American Woodcock. Meet 6 PM east end Aberdeen Wal-Mart parking lot. Leader: Phil Powers, 410-679-4116.

Saturday, March 26

Baltimore. All-day Sea Watch at Ocean City Inlet. Meet 7:30 AM Inlet parking lot. Watch for gannets galore and other seabirds headed north past inlet. Expect to see Brant, scoters, and variety of gulls. Good chance for pelagic birds close to shore. (Red Phalarope was seen March 27, 2004.) Leader will provide snacks. DRESS WARMLY; cold wind can be BRUTAL. Bring lawn chair, spotting scope, warm drinks. Bring lunch or buy at nearby shops. For early start on sea watch, plan to arrive Friday night. Saturday dinner/tally at local restaurant. Optional stay-over Saturday night for birding Inlet, then stops on way home Sunday. Contact leader for motel reservations, meeting place, additional info. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456, ocean_city2001@yahoo.com.

Washington. Greenbrier SP. Meet 8 AM Rte 66 P&R. Leader: Doris Berger, 301-739-8907.

Howard. Beginners' Birding by Ear at Lake Elkhorn. Meet 8:30 AM Broken Land Parkway lot. 2 hours. Easy walk around lake to learn tips on identifying resident birds by ear. Birds should be vigorously singing on territory. No facilities. Leader: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

Sunday, March 27

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.

Howard. Centennial Park. 8 AM west end parking lot. See March 20. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

Talbot. Tilghman Island. No breakfast. Depart St. Michael's Village Shopping Center parking lot adjacent Talbot Bank. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875.

 indicates **Field Trips**

Monday, March 28

MEETING. Tri-County. Annual Dinner Meeting. 6 PM at Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury, featuring *Pat and Clay Sutton*, authors of "How to Spot an Owl." RSVP to Carol Broderick, 410-742-8920.

Wednesday, March 30

Baltimore. Loudon Park Cemetery, 3801 Frederick Ave. Meet 9:30 AM. From Beltway I-695, take exit 13, Rte 144/Frederick Rd east, toward city, away from Catonsville. Go 2.5 miles (at approx. .7 mile Frederick Rd becomes Frederick Ave). Just past Mt. St. Joseph HS, turn right into cemetery main entrance. Leader: Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

Friday, April 1

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "Identifying Bird Areas for Conservation" by *Dr. Robert Chipley*. Meet 8 PM DNR Conference Room, Tawes Bldg, Rowe Blvd, Annapolis.

Harford. Lapidum Landing. Unbeatable river access at ideal time of year. Scan mighty Susquehanna for loons, grebes, waterfowl, raptors, gulls. High hopes of spotting Little and/or Black-headed Gulls. Meet 7:30 AM Lapidum Rd boat launch parking lot. Leader: Dave Webb, 410-939-3537.

Washington. Owls and Woodcocks. Met 5 PM for dinner at Windy Hill Restaurant, Clear Spring. Trip starts Blair's Valley boat ramp 6:30 PM. Call Dave Weesner, 301-432-7718 to reserve.

Saturday, April 2

Kent. Owl Prowl. Trip to hopefully bring us face-to-face with owls. Half day. Meet Eastern Neck NWR 6 PM. Info: Walter Ellison or Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Patuxent. Meet 7:30 AM Fran Uhler Natural Area, end of Lemon Bridge Rd, off Laurel-Bowie Rd (MD 197) just north of Bowie College and MARC line. 3 hours. Info: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.

Frederick. Centennial Park. Linda Keller will lead us for early migrants and lingering waterfowl. Meet 6:30 AM Baker Park. Info: Linda, 301-834-6977.

Cecil. Mt. Harmon Plantation and Grove Neck Sanctuary. Full day. Meet 8 AM Big Elk Mall Dunkin Donuts parking area. Leader: Parke John, 410-287-6037.

Harford. Harford Glen. Trip through marshes, fields, and forest of perennial club favorite. Always-productive location for Blue-winged Teal, Wood Duck, Wilson's Snipe, kinglets, and likely Palm Warbler. Meet 8 AM Mansion house. Leader: Randy Robertson, 410-273-9029.

Montgomery. Blue Mash Nature Trail. Half day. Relatively new (and very birdy) site. Waterproof boots essential. Meet 7:30 AM Zion Rd parking lot. Limited to 8-10 participants. Members of Anne Arundel Bird Club will join on this trip. Call Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185, for reservations/ directions.

Anne Arundel. Blue Mash. New trip visiting this exciting "birdy" site in Montgomery Co. Site of former Oaks Landfill transformed into natural area with hiking trails. Waterproof boots essential. Half day. Meet 6 AM Parole P&R. Call Al Haury: 410-923-0881, for reservations by 3/31.

Sunday, April 3

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.

Howard. Centennial Park. 8 AM west end parking lot. See March 20. Leaders: Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 and Karen Darcy, 410-552-9342.

Talbot. Wade's Point Inn and Bay Hundred. No Breakfast. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot front of Acme, Easton 7 AM. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169, lroslund@bluecrab.org.

Tuesday, April 5

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. First in series of weekly walks to follow progress of migration. Two-three hours and miles of walking. Early departure optional. Some uneven terrain and steep dikes optional at far end. Spring migrant songbirds. Yellow-crowned and Black-crowned Night-Herons possible. From Baltimore Beltway I-695, take I-83 south to east (left) exit on Northern Pkwy, north (left) on Falls Rd, east (right) at south end of Falls Rd bridge (just north of Lake Ave); go .5 mile to intersection. Park and walk to footbridge. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-9769.

MEETING. Baltimore. "The Dashing World of the Hummingbird" by *Peggy Spiegel*, board member for VA Society of Ornithology and member of committee that identifies Important Bird Areas in VA. Doors at Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave, open 7 PM for refreshments and socializing. Lecture 7:45-9 PM.

Wednesday, April 6

MEETING. Carroll. Meet 7:30 PM Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. *Blake Henke* will present "Earth Span/Chesapeake Bay Bald Eagle Tracking Project." Info: Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Continuing survey of bird activity at Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Baltimore. First in series of four Wednesdays in April. Watch spring progress with delightful variety of flowers, trees, and bushes along Cylburn's nature trails. Dwight Johnson of Cylburn Arboretum Association and Baltimore Bird Club will lead. From I-695 Baltimore Beltway, take I-83 south, Jones Falls Expy, then Northern Parkway west. Move to left lane and turn left onto Cylburn Ave, left (south) onto Greenspring Ave, left again almost immediately at stone gate. Follow

MOS Calendar (continued from page 15)

drive to circle in front of mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Park on left before circle. Leader: Dwight Johnson, 410-366-7239.

Thursday, April 7

MEETING. **Frederick.** Gary Smyle will give slide presentation on "The Birds of Frederick County," featuring Gary's great photos of the locals. Meet 7 PM C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick. Info: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098.

Saturday, April 9

Carroll. Birding at Fort Smallwood Park. All day, so pack lunch to look for birds heading north. Can't come for whole day? Then come for half day. Meet 9 AM Rte 32 and I-70 P&R. Leader: Mark Hoffman, 410-549-3598.

Allegany. Garrett County Ponds. Meet 9 AM Parkside School, LaVale. Bring lunch for picnic at New Germany SP. Leader: Roy Brown, 301-724-7769.

Anne Arundel. Smith Island Boat Trip. Meet Pt. Lookout SP (St. Mary's Co) for boat departure at 9 AM. Arrive island 10:30. Depart island 2:30 PM. Arrive Pt. Lookout 6:30 pm. Bring lunch. Cost \$40. Call: Al Haury, 410-923-0881, to reserve.

Montgomery. Banshee Reeks, Loudoun County, VA. Three-quarters day. Meet 8 AM to join Friends of Banshee and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for scheduled walk. Trip may continue to other sites at option of Leader and participants. From Leesburg, take Rte 15 south. Approx 1/4 mile south of Leesburg Bypass, turn left (east) onto Evergreen Mill Rd (Route 621) and proceed south 5 miles. Turn right onto The Woods Rd (Rte 771) and proceed 1 mile to Banshee Reeks entrance on left. Leader: Joe Coleman 540-554-2542, jandkcoleman@erols.com.

Sunday, April 10

Baltimore. Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.

Harford. Jerusalem Mill. Leisurely stroll around historic area along Little Gunpowder River from Mill to Jericho Covered Bridge. Hopes of finding Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush. Meet at Mill (off Jerusalem Rd) 7:30 AM. Leader: Phil Powers, 410-679-4116.

Talbot. Jean Ellen duPont Shehan Audubon Sanctuary. Breakfast Hosts: Linda and Paul Makosky. Depart St. Michael's Village Shopping Center parking lot adjacent Talbot Bank 7 AM. Leader: Amy Bourque, 410-745-9283, abourque@audubon.org.

Howard. Centennial Park. 8 AM west end parking lot. See March 20. Leader: Jeff Freidhoffer, 410-997-5366.

Tuesday, April 12

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. Weekly walks to follow progress of migration. See April 5.

MEETING. **Allegany.** "Butterfly ID and Host Plants," by *Caroline Blizzard* from DCL Discovery Center. Attract butterflies and birds to our yards. Meet 7 PM, Frostburg Public Library, 65 E. Main St. Info: Barbara Gaffney, 301-895-4646.

Wednesday, April 13

Baltimore. Hampton National Historic Site. See March 9.

Baltimore. Cylburn nature trails, second Wednesday in series. Parking on left before circle. Leader: Dwight Johnson, 410-366-7239.

Thursday, April 14

MEETING. **Howard.** "Monarch Butterfly Migration Research at Chincoteague NWR" by *Denise Gibbs*, Naturalist, Black Hill RP. 8 PM Howard Co Rec & Parks Dept, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM. Info: Jeff Freidhoffer, 410-997-5336.

Saturday, April 16

Patuxent. Point Lookout SP for late waterfowl, gulls, early migrant songbirds. Meet 7:30 AM Bowie

P&R. Possible stop for Kelp Gull. Call Fred Shaffer for reservations, 410-721-1744.

Cecil. Conowingo Wildflowers and Birds Walk. Half day. Meet 8 AM Fisherman's Park lot at Conowingo Dam. Leader: Ken Drier, 410-658-9955.

Tri-County. Nature Conservancy's Nassawango Preserve for migrant warblers and vireos before trees leaf out. Expect Red-shouldered Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, possibly Barred Owl. Half day. Leader: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Howard. UMDCF and other sparrow hotspots. 7 AM. Half or all day (bring lunch). Limit: 12. Search wetland and dry fields in search of sparrows and early migrants. Focus on sparrows with hopes of Vesper. Chance for shorebirds and dabbling ducks. Expect difficult walking most of the day. Knee boots a must. Facilities at some spots. Call Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

Montgomery. Bird Pedal. Half day. Leisurely ride with frequent stops for birding along Mount Vernon Trail beside Potomac River (VA). Start at Daingerfield Island parking lot next to sailing marina, cycle through Alexandria on designated trail-streets, end with birding at Dyke Marsh. 10 miles round trip on smooth level surfaces. Coffee break on return at Schumann's Bakery. Reservations required. Leader: Dave Winer, 301-229-8963.

Talbot. Poplar Island Census. Limited seating; reservation required. Depart 7 AM (location TBA), return 2 PM. Bring lunch. Leaders: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875, and Chrissy Albanese.

Saturday-Sunday, April 16-17

Frederick. Eastern Shore. Marcia Balestri will lead us on overnight trip to various Eastern Shore sites, including Deal Island, E.A. Vaughn, Taylor Landing, Irish Grove, and Assateague for spring migrants and local residents. Meet 6 AM Saturday Rte 75 P&R, just south of I-70. Details: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098.

Sunday, April 17

🦋 **Baltimore.** Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.

🦋 **Anne Arundel.** Meyer Station for woodland birds, early migrants. Half day. Bring lunch. Meet 7:30 AM Parole P&R parking lot. Leader: Leo Weigant, 410-647-9251.

🦋 **Talbot.** Walk. Location, departure time, and leader TBA. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot in front of Acme, Easton.

🦋 **Harford.** Conowingo Greenways Trail. Noted poet and wildflower guru Colleen Webster joins naturalist Dave Ziolkowski for in-depth look at flora and fauna of this fantastic natural area. Easy hike follows flat greenways trail from Stafford Rd to base of Conowingo Dam. Tripgoers can expect trout-lily, Virginia bluebells, Dutchman's breeches and host of other wildflowers and critters. Meet 8 AM intersection Craigs Corner and Stafford (at bridge over Deer Creek) Rds. Contact: Colleen, 410-942-0867.

🦋 **Howard.** Butterflies and Wildflowers. 9:30 AM. 2 hours. Meet Cradlerock parking lot. Easy walk by lakeside and along power lines in search of early spring wildflowers and butterflies. We will study some butterflies in the hand. Binoculars helpful. No facilities. Leaders: Bob Solem, 301-725-5037, and Dick Smith, 410-997-7439.

Tuesday, April 19

🦋 **Baltimore.** Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. Weekly walks to follow progress of migration. See April 5.

MEETING. **Kent.** *Glen Therres* of DNR will speak about Bald Eagles. Meet 7:30 PM Kent County Library, Chestertown. Info: Walter Ellison, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

Wednesday, April 20

🦋 **Baltimore.** Hampton National Historic Site. See March 9.

🦋 indicates **Field Trips**

🦋 **Baltimore.** Cylburn nature trails, third Wednesday in series. Parking on left before circle. Leader: Dwight Johnson, 410-366-7239.

ANNUAL MOS CONFERENCE registration deadline. See page 7.

Thursday, April 21

MEETING. **Caroline.** "Fort Delaware Rookery" by *Ray Bivens*. Come hear about one of the largest heron rookeries in the East. Meet 7:30 PM Caroline County Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

🦋 **Howard.** Weekday Walk at Wilde Lake. Meet at barn 8 AM. 2-3 hours. Easy walk along lake and wooded stream. Focus on birding by ear. Some early warblers possible. No facilities. Leader: David Holmes. Info: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

Thursday-Sunday April 21-24

MEETING. **The Wilson Ornithological Society and the Association of Field Ornithologists** meet jointly in Beltsville. See page 4 for details.

Saturday, April 23

🦋 **Carroll.** Bird Walk at Hashawha. Never know what you might find during spring migration. Meet 7 AM Bear Branch Nature Center, John Owings Rd, Westminster. Leaders: Mark and Tammy Schwaab, 410-857-4913.

🦋 **Kent.** Beginners' Bird Walk, all welcome. 2 hours. Meet 9 AM Eastern Neck NWR HQ. Info: Walter Ellison or Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.

🦋 **Cecil.** North East and Elkton Town Parks. Half day. Meet 7 AM Big Elk Mall Dunkin Donuts parking area. Leader: Richard Donham, 610-932-0634.

🦋 **Harford.** Susquehanna SP. Celebrate John James Audubon's birthday by enjoying early spring wildflowers and migrant songbirds. Likely Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush, while flower enthusiasts

can expect blooming trout-lily, purple trillium, and Jack-in-the-pulpit. Meet 7 AM Rock Run Mill for best looks; late risers and flower peepers meet 8:30 AM for birding/natural history walk. Leader: Ray Cheicante, 410-803-2712.

🦋 **Anne Arundel.** National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. for woodland birds and spring flowers. Half day. Meet 8 AM Parole P&R. Leader: Marilyn Taylor, 410-923-0069.


🦋 **BIG SIT.** **Frederick.** Join us for second annual "fun"draising event to benefit MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Contact Linda Keller, 301-834-6977.

🦋 **Howard.** Earth Day at Mt. Pleasant. Beginners' Bird Walk. Meet at shed 8 AM. 1-2 hours. Easy walk through fields of Mt. Pleasant farm. Treelines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Great place for flyovers. Learn basics of binocular and field guide use. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643.


🦋 **Baltimore.** Huntley Meadows Park, VA. Meet 7:30 AM Nursery Rd /Hammonds Ferry Rd P&R. (Take I-695 Beltway exit 8. From outer loop [south], ramp leads across Hammonds Ferry Rd to parking lot. From inner loop, ramp leads to Nursery Rd. Follow ramp right on Fairview, turn right on Nursery Rd, right on Hammonds Ferry Rd, left at light into P&R.) Trip to northern VA freshwater marsh with boardwalk trail for resident wildlife and spring migrants. Coots, Canada Geese on nests, turtles, water snakes, and other water wildlife allowing close approach and good views. American Bittern, Sora possible. Two-three hour (and mile) level walk on paved paths and boardwalks. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217, pete_webb@juno.com.


🦋 **Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walk at Fort McHenry. 8 AM-Noon. Cancelled if raining. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.


MOS Calendar (continued from page 17)**Saturday-Sunday, April 23-24**

 **Tri-County.** Delmarva Birding Weekend. Choose from 17 exciting birding trips—from Fenwick Island, DE, to Smith Island, MD. Brochures available at Tri-County Bird Club meetings or call 410-632-3617. Full day.

Sunday, April 24


 **Baltimore.** Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.


 **Talbot.** Hope House Farm and Tunis Mills environs. Breakfast. Hosts: Marge and George Steffens. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot in front of Acme, Easton 7 AM. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169, lroslund@bluecrab.org.

 **Howard.** Rockburn Branch Park. Meet 8 AM in parking lot on left just past restored schoolhouse. Half day. Moderate but lengthy walk through woods and fields of our largest county park for early migrants. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available. Leaders: Karen Darcy, 410-552-9342, and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731.


EARTH DAY FESTIVAL. Carroll.


Earthworks Festival at Hashawha. Come one, come all for enjoyable day. Don Jewell will man booth on behalf of CCBC. Contact Don, 410-346-7738, for festival time and/or if you are interested in helping.

 **Baltimore.** Chimney Swifts in Hampden. Come at 6:30 PM to see migrating Chimney Swifts as they pour into chimneys at the Bookbindery. If weather is cloudy or gray, come 1 hour early, as swifts enter chimney earlier. Last year 3,000+ swifts entered. Canceled if raining. Leaders: Carol Schreter, 410-664-5151, and Joan Cwi.

 **Baltimore.** Patapsco Valley SP/Granite area. Expect variety of birds with up to 16 species of warblers. Boots recommended; part of hiking loop may be muddy. Meet 7:30 AM. From I-695 take Liberty Rd (Exit 18/MD Rte 26) west 2 miles to

Old Court Rd (MD Rte 125). Turn left on Old Court Rd and drive 5.5 miles through Granite to Patapsco River. Cross bridge and park beyond railroad tracks. Leader, Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489, oriolekec1@comcast.net.


 **Montgomery.** Triadelphia Lake Area. Half day. Migrants in variety of habitats. Start time 7:30 AM. Call leader for meeting place and directions. Limit 9. Reservations required. Leader: Rick Sussman, 301-774-1185.

 **Montgomery.** Charles County. Full day. 100+ species possible. Contact leader for details. Meet 6 AM leader's house for possible Whip-poor-will. Limit 10. Reservations required. Info/Leader: George Jett, 301-843-3524, gmjett@comcast.net.

Monday, April 25**MEETING. Tri-County.**


"Biogeography and Origins of Bird Families" by world-class birder *Eric Decker*. Meet 7 PM Asbury UMC, Camden Ave, Salisbury (Fox Room, south entrance). Info: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, April 26


 **Baltimore.** Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. Weekly walks to follow progress of migration. See April 5.

MEETING. Washington. "Colonial Waterbirds Are Not Birds from the 1600's" presented by *David Brinker*. Meet 7:30 PM Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Info: Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454.

Wednesday, April 27


 **Baltimore.** Cylburn nature trails, fourth Wednesday in series. Parking on left before circle. Leader: Dwight Johnson, 410-366-7239.


Thursday, April 28


 **Montgomery.** Rock Creek Park, DC. Half day. Migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet 7 AM Picnic Area #18, one-half mile below Nature Center on Ridge Rd. Call Leader for


info or specific directions. Reservations required. Leader: Rob Hilton, 301-587-6136.

Saturday, April 30


 **Anne Arundel and Talbot.** Pickering Creek Audubon Center for early spring migrants, shorebirds. Full day. Hardwood forest, brackish marsh, and mile of shoreline along river. Bring lunch and come make some new friends. Meet 6:30 AM Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot, off Rte 50, or 8 AM Pickering Creek Center. Leaders: Al Haury, 410-923-0881, and Mark Scallion.

 **Harford.** Stoney Forest. After brief hiatus, club returns to this often-overlooked, local, state-owned hardwood tract near Creswell. Impressive area for migrating forest-interior dwellers such as Ovenbird, Tennessee Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager. Meet 7 AM McDonald's parking lot near intersection Rte 7 and MD 543 (Riverside Shopping Ctr). Co-leaders: Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978, and Dave Larkin.


 **Frederick.** Audrey Carroll in Spring. Look for warblers, sparrows and other migrants. Call Leader: Dave Smith, 410-549-7082.


 **Cecil.** Spring Season at Fair Hill Nature Center. Half day. Meet 7 AM FHNC covered bridge parking area (small fee). Leader: Meta Little, meta368@juno.com.

WORK DAY. Allegany. **Carey Run Sanctuary.** Hard workers needed to help at sanctuary in Finzel. Bring yard tools like rakes, shovels, and chainsaws. Bring place setting and covered dish to share for lunch. Beverages supplied. Info: Barbara Gaffney, 301-895-4646.


 **Baltimore.** Halethorpe Ponds. Meet 7:30 AM. Diverse habitat of little-birded area includes river, freshwater ponds, floodplain woods, and power line. Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, and both orioles abundant. Also likely: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, Bald Eagle,


pheasant, Blue Grosbeak, Northern Waterthrush, and Wilson's and other warblers. Paths may be wet and muddy. Possible side trip to Mears Farm area and Patapsco Valley SP. Half-day. Bring insect repellent, water, snacks. Leader: Joel Martin, 410-744-9211, jcdimartin@aol.com.


 **Baltimore.** Breakfast with the Birds at Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave. 7:30 AM Breakfast (fee). 8 AM Birdwalk. For information contact Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204, dwheeler@mail.bcpl.net. From I-83 Jones Falls Expy take Northern Pkwy West. Move to left lane and turn left onto Cylburn Ave., left (south) onto Greenspring Ave; turn left again immediately at stone gate; follow drive to circle in front of mansion.

 **Howard.** Avalon Area of Patapsco Valley SP and Stan's Hotspots. All day. Meet 8 AM McDonald's parking lot US Rte 1, south of Elkridge. Walk areas along Patapsco River for early spring arrivals. Other areas possible include wetlands in Elkridge, Belmont Conference Center, and Halethorpe pond in Baltimore Co. Moderate to difficult walk and possible wet areas. Restroom and lunch break at fast food place; bring lunch if desired. **OPTIONAL OWLS:** 5 AM pre-trip to reliable spot for Eastern Screech-Owls. For info and details, call Stan Arnold 410-768-0155, or cell, 410-428-7567.


Sunday, May 1


 **Anne Arundel.** Patuxent Research Refuge, North Tract for migrant and breeding woodland birds. Half day. Meet 6:30 AM Parole P&R. Leader: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518.


 **Baltimore.** Cylburn self-guided walk. See March 20.

 **Kent.** Millington area for spring migration at its peak—warblers, grosbeaks, warblers, flycatchers, and warblers (we hope.) Half day. Info: Walter Ellison or Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, or Peter Mann, 410-648-5205.


 indicates Field Trips

 **Baltimore.** Marriottsville Warblers. Resident warblers include Prothonotary and Worm-eating. Yellow-throated Warbler and Barred Owl possible. Meet 8 AM. From Beltway exit 18 Liberty Rd, west 4.9 miles to Marriottsville Rd, left 4 miles past quarry and rifle range to unmarked, narrow road with mailboxes, before bridge. Turn right, continue to small unpaved parking lot on left. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652, mycoconut@msn.com.

 **Talbot.** Adkins Arboretum Beginners' Walk. Please bring a new birder of any age. Come and meet members of award-winning junior World Series of Birding Team from Centreville Middle School prior to their participation in this year's competition in Cape May, NJ. Depart Tred Avon Shopping Center parking lot front of Acme, Easton 7 AM. Lunch Host: Sylvan Kaufman. Leaders: Sylvan Kaufman and Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002.

 **Howard.** Hugg-Thomas WMA. Meet at gravel lot 8 AM. Half day. Moderate walking through woodlands and field edges. Great habitat for warblers, tanagers, and vireos. Nesting Hooded and Kentucky Warblers, Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush. No facilities. Leaders: Dave and Maureen Harvey, 410-795-3117.


Tuesday, May 3


 **Baltimore.** Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 am. Weekly walks to follow progress of migration. See April 5.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** "Identifying Spring Warblers by Sight and Song" by *Peter Webb*, president of Baltimore Bird Club. Doors at Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Ave open 7 PM for refreshments and socializing. Lecture 7:45–9 PM.

Wednesday, May 4

MEETING. **Carroll.** Meet 7:30 PM Senior Center, Stoner Ave, Westminster. Jerry Tarbell will present this year's Final Exam. Info: Laura Tarbell, 410-857-1109.

 **Baltimore.** First Wednesdays at Ft. McHenry. 9:30 AM-Noon. Continuing survey of bird activity at Fort. Canceled in bad weather. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.


 **Montgomery.** Flag Ponds, Calvert County. Two-thirds day. Local expert Arlene Ripley leads us through woods, bog, and beach of limited-access nature park to see migrants, arriving breeders, notably Yellow-throated Warbler, as well as such spring flora as showy orchis. Limit 12; reservations required. Details and directions from Coordinator: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252.

Thursday, May 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Daphne Gemmill* will present "Sound-recording Darwin Finches, Galapagos Islands." Meet 7 PM C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick. Info: Marcia Balestri, 301-473-5098.

Friday, May 6

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Conservation of Black and Turkey Vultures" by *Dr. Jim Fraser*. Meet 8 PM DNR Conference Room, Tawes Bldg, Rowe Blvd, Annapolis.

 **Montgomery.** Pennyfield Lock. Half day. Birding by ear (with timed intervals for talking). Migrant and nesting land birds. Meet end of Pennyfield Lock Rd 7 AM. Reservations required. Leaders: Cyndie Loeper, 301-530-8226, and Ann Lucy, 301-229-8810.

WANTED: BLOCKBUSTERS

MOS will be hiring **FIELD WORKERS** for the Maryland/District of Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas Project 2005 field season to work in atlas blocks with little or no coverage (block-busting) and to concurrently conduct 15-stop relative abundance surveys in atlas blocks. Applicants must be skilled at identifying birds of the Middle Atlantic Region by both sound and sight, and have a good intuitive feel for the habitat preferences of the Region's birdlife.

Block-busters will be paid by the block.

Each block should receive a minimum of 5.5 hours of field work, including a 15-stop relative abundance survey route.

The expected period of employment will be from 25 May to 31 July although shorter periods may be negotiated.

The application deadline is 31 March 2005.

Please send a resume and names of three references to Jane Coskren, MOS Atlas Board Chair, 6324 Sandchain Rd, Columbia, MD 21045; with a copy to Walter Ellison, MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator, 23460 Clarissa Rd, Chestertown, MD 21620.

Electronic submissions may be sent to coskren@erols.com or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

In Search Of: Tech Help

The MOS Board is looking for **computer-savvy folks** to help out with a variety of tasks. If you have experience with databases, PageMaker, or Internet applications, we can use your skills. For more information, please contact Janet Millenson, janet@twocrows.com, 301-983-9337.

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

*Cylburn Mansion
4915 Greenspring Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21290-4698*

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